

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PEKING 00851 050814Z

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ACTION SS-25

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R 050730Z MAY 75
FM USLO PEKING
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3689
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 851

EXDIS

E.O.11652: XGDS-1
TAGS:PFOR CH US
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT FORD'S VISIT TO PRC - CLARE HOLLINGWORTH STORY

REF: PEKING 844

1. LONDON DAILY TELEGRAPH CORRESPONDENT CLARE HOLLINGWORTH ACCOMPANIED PERRIGRINE WORTHORNE DURING HIS CALL ON MR. BUSH MAY 4. IN THE COURSE OF A DISCUSSION OF CHIAO KUAN-HUA'S REMARKS TO BRITISH JOURNALISTS MUCH ALONG LINES REFTEL, HOLLINGWORTH SAID, ALMOST IN PASSING, THAT A "SENIOR PRC FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL" HAD TOLD HER THAT UNLESS THE U.S. WAS PREPARED "TO COMPROMISE" ON THE CHINESE THREE CONDITIONS FOR NORMALIZATION, PRESIDENT FORD'S VISIT TO PEKING MIGHT NOT MATERIALIZE. WHEN IT WAS NOTED THAT "A SENIOR FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL" SOUNDED LIKE CHIAO KUAN-HUA, HOLLINGWORTH DID NOT DISSENT AND APPEARED TO WANT TO CONVEY THE IMPRESSION THAT IT WAS CHIAO. MR. BUSH INDICATED HE HAD NO SUCH INDICATIONS FROM ANY SOURCE WHATSOEVER.

2. IN STRICT CONFIDENCE WE HAVE CHECKED WITH THE BRITISH HERE TO DETERMINE A) WHETHER THEY HAVE HEARD A SIMILAR STORY FROM HOLLINGWORTH OR OTHERS ON THE BRITISH PRESS DELEGATION (THEY HAVE NOT); AND B) WHAT CREDIBILITY THEY WOULD ATTACH TO SUCH A STORY FROM HOLLINGWORTH. BRITISH EMBOFF, WHO IS AN OLD FRIEND OF HOLLINGWORTH'S
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SAID THAT SHE DOESN'T HAVE ENOUGH TO DO IN PEKING AND

OCCASIONALLY "TENDS TO FANTACIZE". HE NOTED THAT HOLLINGWORTH DOES NOT HAVE ACCESS TO CHIAO KUAN-HUA, BUT NORMALLY SEES OFFICIALS OF THE MFA INFORMATION DEPARTMENT. HE ADDED THAT SHE HAD RETURNED TO PEKING ONLY TWO DAYS AGO AFTER A RATHER LONG ABSENCE, AND THAT THE ONLY TIME SHE WOULD HAVE SEEN CHIAO SINCE HER RETURN WOULD HAVE BEEN WITH THE JOURNALIST DELEGATION, NONE OF WHOM HAVE COME UP WITH A SIMILAR STORY. HE CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT WHILE HE FINDS IT USEFUL TO DISCUSS EVENTS IN CHINA WITH HOLLINGWORTH, HE TREATS HER MORE SENSATIONAL STORIES WITH GREAT SKEPTICISM.

3. WE ARE REPORTING THE ABOVE INFORMATION A) BECAUSE HOLLINGWORTH MAY TRY IT OUT ON OTHERS IN THE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY AND IT MAY APPEAR IN THE PRESS; AND B) IT IS AN INDICATION THAT CLARE HOLLINGWORTH IS CAPABLE OF MANUFACTURING "INFORMATION", BOTH IN PURSUIT OF A STORY AND TO BUILD UP HER OWN REPUTATION AS A REPORTER HAVING INSIDE SOURCES IN PEKING. BUSH

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